

# EFFECTIVE NEW FUNGICIDE GROUP FOR POWDERY MILDEW

21 October 2011

**T**HE risk of powdery mildew in wine grapes and table grapes has been high this season.

After their difficulties in controlling devastating powdery mildew infestations throughout the 2010-2011 season – and the great risk of carryover into this season – grape growers have been very vigilant, and careful to implement effective fungicide programs.

A major difference between this season and the last is that growers have a totally new and highly effective fungicide group to tackle powdery mildew, and safeguard their crop's full yield and quality potential.

Vivando is the first commercial fungicide in the world to be developed from this new class of fungicides, and was registered by the APVMA in time for Australia's 2011/2012 grape season.

The active ingredient metrafenone – from the benzophenone group of fungicides, Group U8 – has proved to be highly active against grape powdery mildew; and has exhibited a sound profile for crop and environmental safety, and for grape and wine quality.

Crop Care national business manager for horticulture, Kerrie Mackay said this was a significant development in powdery mildew control, bringing new qualities to a protectant spray program.

“Vivando works several ways against powdery mildew, affecting three development stages of the disease in grapevines. It disturbs the normal development of powdery mildew by preventing penetration of the plant cuticle and stopping infection of the plant tissue. If powdery mildew has already penetrated the plant, further growth and production of spores is also stopped – making new infections from that site impossible.

## Extended period of uniform cover

“This unique fungicide has both local systemic and vapour-phase activity.

“Taken up rapidly across the cuticle of grape leaves, a proportion moves to the leaf tip and margins – sufficient to ensure good powdery mildew control on the leaf.

“Also, with its active vapour phase, research has shown that Vivando remains present in the airspace around clusters immediately after treatment, and for up to 14 days after treatment – in sufficient concentration to protect the clusters from powdery mildew attack.”

Fungicides applied just before flowering and during the five weeks after fruit set are very important – to protect the young berries when they are most susceptible, and when potential for loss is greatest.

The concern for wine grape growers is that infected bunches can cause off-flavours in wine; even minor levels of powdery mildew (3-4 bunches in a bin) can result in rejection by some wineries. For table grape growers, producing high keeping-quality, blemish-free fruit is a major priority.

Kerrie Mackay: “Vivando is ideal for use during this critical control period, providing more uniform protection of both leaves and berries – through uptake by the leaves, plus vapour distribution reaching into the airspace to protect bunches.

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“Vivando is also rainfast within one hour of application, showing no loss of activity after 60mm of rain – providing a high level of protection as soon as the spray dries on leaves and berries.”

### Australian trials

Vivando has been tested widely in Australian grapevines over several seasons since 2003 – at Osmington and Yallingup, WA; Adelaide Hills, SA; and Strathbogie Ranges, Victoria on verdelho, chardonnay and cabernet sauvignon vines – displaying very good to excellent performance against powdery mildew in grapevines, with no adverse effects on bunch or leaf development.

With applications beginning from early flowering or the start of capfall, on a 14-day schedule – and compared with other industry standards such as Flint, Prosper and Legend – Vivando provided equivalent, effective control of powdery mildew.

Australian Wine Research institute (AWRI) studies showed no adverse impact on fermentation or overall wine quality.

### Maintaining the usefulness of this new fungicide group

As for all fungicides, to protect the effectiveness of this very useful fungicide over the long term, Crop Care recommends its wise use – applying Vivando as part of a protective, rather than curative schedule. The number of applications should be limited to no more than two consecutive sprays 7-10 days apart, before changing to an alternative fungicide group – applying no more than four applications of Vivando each season.

Growers are also advised to ensure good coverage of target foliage and developing bunches through canopy management and effective spraying practices; and to observe label rates and withholding period (allowing 5 weeks between final application and harvest). If grapes are being grown for export (either fresh, dried or for wine production), check with Crop Care or the Australian Wine Research Institute (AWRI) for more information on MRLs and import tolerances.



Vivando protected winegrapes Lenswood 2010-11 Gereon



powdery mildew affected grapevines

### For More Information:

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